

# ONSLOW HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Established 1968

## Newsletter

## August 2019

### Welcome to our August Newsletter

The new committee's first event was well attended. On 4 August we enjoyed an afternoon at the silent movies with hosts Loretta Lander and David Beattie. It was a full house! To start we saw a short 1960's film *The Defective Detective* by Maxwell Bruce who came with his wife, Pamela. It was so good to have them

present. Both are long time members of OHS and we have many of Max's still photographs in our collection. You will go down in history Max.

This was followed by a 1922 theatrical version of *Madam Butterfly* with a

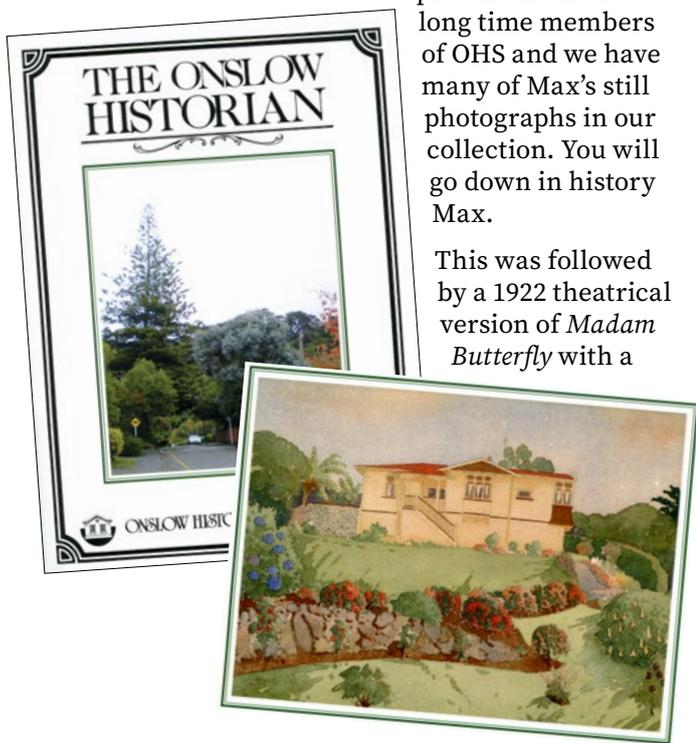
wonderful piano accompaniment by David. We all hummed *One Fine Day*, and sniffed a little. At the conclusion we had afternoon tea, beautifully served, thanks Loretta, and thanks to Committee members Helen Wilson for cucumber sandwiches, and Joy McNicoll for her 'I must have that recipe' mini-muffins.

We had gathered at Loretta's house in Woodmancote Road and it was only on the way home I recalled *The Onslow Historian* that Loretta researched and wrote for us in 2008. Titled "Three decades in Woodmancote Road 1930-1960" it included contributions from Max who lived at number 37 Woodmancote Road. I should have had copies to view on the occasion (I regret I am not remembering well like I use to!). Copies are available at \$10 from KATE.

Our repairs and maintenance programme at KATE is coming along well. We have a beautifully repainted kitchen, toilet and wash room and with the clever use of suitable materials have smoothed and painted the floor in the foyer. It's the first tidy-up since our work in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The Gallery work will now follow and once completed we will be ready for an in-house event and speaker or two.

The Committee has met twice since the AGM and we are attending to all aspects of OHS work as we have the time. New members are joining us. **Current subscriptions are coming in, but slowly**, that's a reminder statement for some of you!! Looking forward to seeing many of you at the September event.

Best wishes  
**Judy Siers, President**



Front and back cover of *The Onslow Historian* Volume 37, numbers 2 and 3, 2008. A view of Woodmancote Road looking towards the Khandallah Reserve, 2008 and the house at 31 Woodmancote Road, from a water colour painting by a Mr C. Turpin, 1950.

### An apology!

An apology to committee member Joy for the mis-spelling of her name in the June Newsletter. She is Joy McNicoll, no H is required. But not to worry, we all know the quote, Shakespeare made it clear "... a rose by any other name would smell as sweet ...".

86 Khandallah Road, Wellington

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~ Chorus is the Society's major sponsor ~



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# September Event

## Two Visits in One

### Christ Church, Taita and the Hutt Valley School of Riding for the Disabled, Silverstream

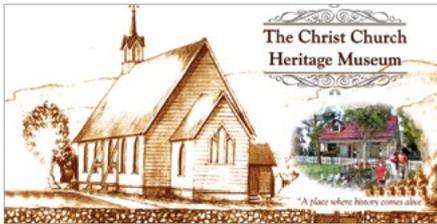
**Thursday 19 September, 10 am–2 pm, a bus trip**

**Christ Church:** 10.30am–11.45 am

**Hutt Valley Riding for the Disabled:** 12 pm – 1.30pm

**Cost:** \$50 (includes a \$5 donation to each of the above)

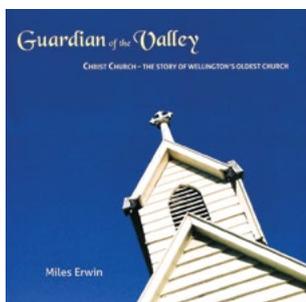
**Departure and return:** KATE at 10am returning 2pm



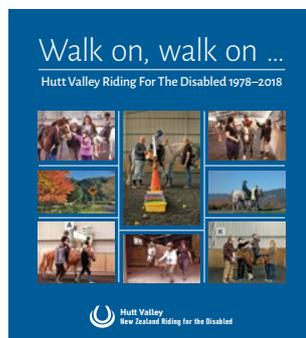
As advertised earlier in our June Newsletter OHS is collaborating with the Early Settlers and the Founders Wellington

Branch to visit Christ Church, Taita. We will have a guided tour of the church and the garden, and hear about the proposed heritage museum.

This event has now been extended to include a visit to the Hutt Valley School of Riding for the Disabled at County Lane, Silverstream. They are celebrating 40 years. They have grown from a one horse–one rider session, on Sundays on Pony Club land in Upper Hutt, to owning their home, managing a thriving business and offering opportunities only dreamed of for those in need. They have turned wilderness land into a



A fine history of Christ Church has been written by Miles Erwin, *Guardian of the Valley, Christ Church – The Story of Wellington's Oldest Church.*



*Walk on, walk on...* the cover of the book that tells the 40 year history and the remarkable success of this Hutt Valley organisation.

professional school with landscaped grounds and purpose designed buildings. This includes an enclosed arena and we are hopeful that there will be activity there on the day that we can view from the visitor's platform. Our lunch will be served in the Board Room.

**Contact:** Judy Siers 04-934 6334; email: siersjudy@gmail.com to register and to discuss alternative transport if required. We would like to fill the 24-seater bus, but there is an option to travel independently and to delete \$15 from the price.

## The Rangitikei Trip – visiting architecturally significant homesteads and more

**Sunday 17 November 2019**

**Departure and return:** KATE 9am – 6.30/7pm

**Cost:** \$105 including lunch

**Tour leader:** John Vickers

This event has been promoted in the last two Newsletters so members can go back and reread the information presented that also contained illustrations. In summary: heritage houses, *Lethenty*, *Merchiston* and *Woodleigh Farm* will be visited, and lunch will be served at the latter. The Maori Church at Wheriko, the monument to Bess the famous WW1 horse and Scott's Ferry Barge are included in the tour.

**Contact:** Joy McNicoll, telephone 04-479 1098. The deadline for registration is Sunday 13 October 2019.

## Wellington's Heritage Week 28 October – 3 November 2019

More news about Heritage activities will be a feature of our next Newsletter.



WELLINGTON  
HERITAGE  
WEEK 2019  
28 OCT - 3 NOV

86 Khandallah Road, Wellington

email: onslowhistorical@gmail.com

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# Farewell Ruth Gotlieb – we won't forget you!

*She was a both a ray of sunshine and a bolt of lightning.*

From the Ruth Gotlieb Library Remembrance book, July 2019



Ruth Gotlieb QSO, one of OHS's best remembered Patrons, died on 23 July 2019. She was the most enthusiastic and loyal supporter of everything we did and never failed to be available for us. In the early 1990s she endorsed our application to WCC to acquire



**CUMMINGS PARK LIBRARY**  
*OPENING DAY, Saturday 25th November 1989, with the City of Wellington Pipe Band and Councillor Ruth Gotlieb, Patron of the Onslow Historical Society.*  
Photographs: W.C.C. Photographic Archives.

The new library, designed by Paul Lenihan, replaces the small library formerly attached to the Ngaio Town Hall. Up until 1925 the district had no library and the Ngaio Progressive Association undertook the establishment of a collection of some 200-300 books to be kept on one side of the hall. The Council agreed to supply books that could be spared, but by 1930 the demand had grown and it became a branch of the Wellington Public Library.

The construction of the new building together with the upgrading and



extensions to the Town Hall, was proposed in 1986. The new library adjoins the entrance to Cummings Park.

The park was described in Council yearbooks for many years as Ottawa Road Rest Park, but was renamed Cummings Park in 1950 after the death of Herbert Cummings in 1949, in recognition of his community work. The park area is 2 acres 2 roods and 37.98 perches, once John Chew's land known as Millwood, in the suburb of Crofton, near Wellington.

the use of KATE; our purpose was a change of use-age of the building and required Council consent. She attended our functions regularly and made generous donations.

Her funeral, on Sunday 28 July, was held in the Opera House. Around 600 people attended, such was her popularity and the measure of those who loved and respected her and admired her contribution to the city. Her story is well described in the *Dominion Post* articles published 24 and 27 July.

Ruth and I attended the launch of the Society's *The Onslow Historian* on 23 May 2015 at the Ohariu Valley Hall (a listed heritage building). John and Liz Hume sent this

photograph to me a few weeks ago, proof of our attendance and that we were having a great time. The Holy Trinity Ladies Guild, with the entire population of Ohariu, turned out and turned on a fabulous old fashioned afternoon tea. Wow!



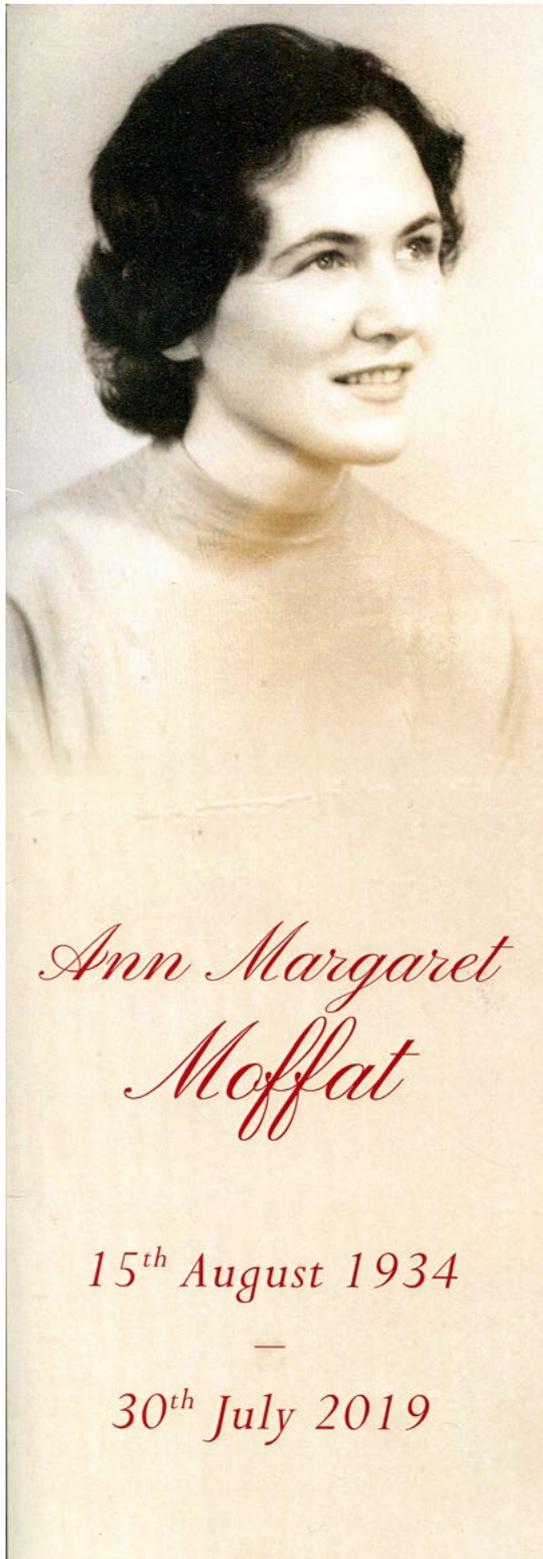
The front cover of *The Onslow Historian*, Volume 45, 2015 that tells the story of the Holy Trinity Ladies Guild 1955-2015.

Although an Eastern Ward Councillor it was in her role as WCC Chair of the Library and Cultural Committee that brought her to the northern suburbs. She opened the new Ngaio Library on 25 November 1989 with her usual enthusiasm as reported here, left, in our *The Onslow Historian*, Volume 21 Number 1, 1991.



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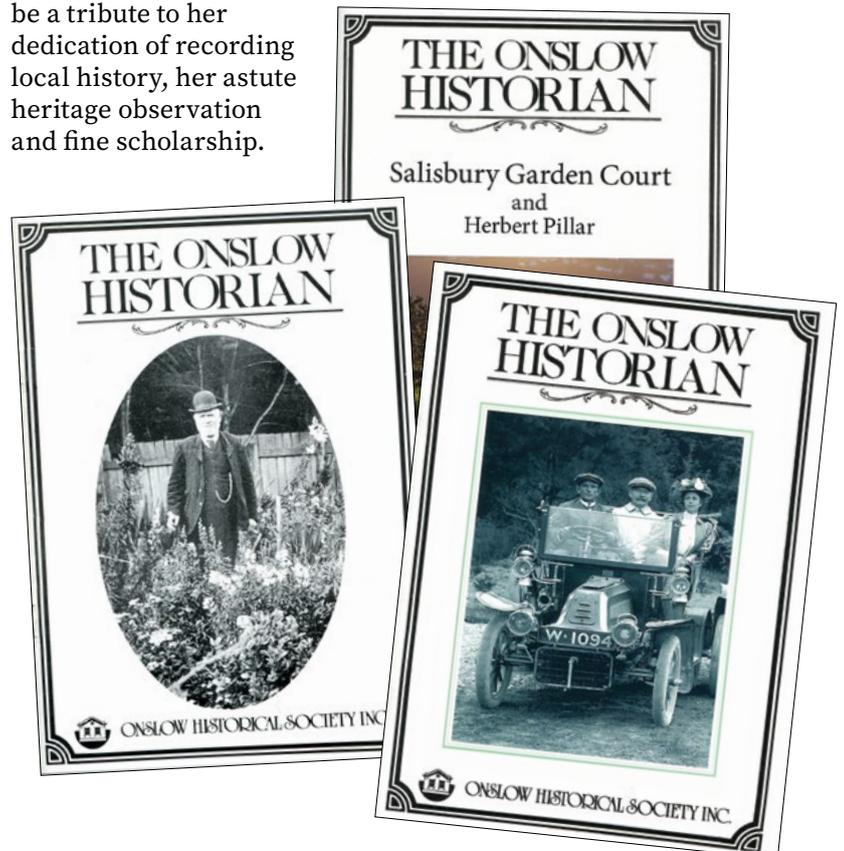
## Another tribute to a dear friend of the OHS



Ann Margaret Moffat died on 30 July 2019. She was 84 years old. Ann and her husband John joined the Society many years ago and were regular participants at our events. But it was in research that John and Ann excelled themselves in contribution. Ann took part in our Onslow Historian publishing programme. I would often contact her for clarification or additional information about a particular piece of local history. John and Ann supported the establishment of the OHS Archives and donated significant documents.

Ann's funeral service was held at the Wadestown Presbyterian church on 6 August 2019. Member Barbara Hampton represented OHS at the event, and signed the attendance book on our behalf. Our sympathy is extended to John and the family.

Ann produced and wrote and contributed to *The Onslow Historian*. Over the years she collected much material for a variety of local history projects and it would be a splendid outcome if some could be published in the future. This would be a tribute to her dedication of recording local history, her astute heritage observation and fine scholarship.



The Onslow Historians that Ann researched, wrote or contributed to: *Crofton House and John Holmes*, Volume 27, 1997, *The Izards of Wellington and their contributions to the city*, Volume 34, 2004 and *Salisbury Garden Court*, Volume 46, 2016.



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## The OHS Library

*With Wellington Central Library closed KATE may be an ideal destination on a Sunday afternoon, 1–4 pm.*

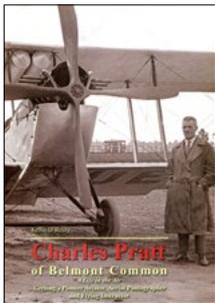
OHS has a small but interesting library that is relevant to both our local and regional history. It is a collection of books and booklets largely donated and with selected purchases. Some are rare in that they are no longer in print. Some titles are for general reading, written by local authors in local settings and donated by members or local residents. We have fascinating scrap books with media clippings and magazines, all originating from members of OHS.

The Lawson Robertson Collection of research papers are in the library collection and not in archives, as one could presume to be their rightful place, because they are paged and bound in large format plastic books

and can be easily handled without destruction. They include aspects of Johnsonville, Newlands, Grenada, Paparangi and the northern areas. They are a hugely valuable resource.

A complete set of *The Onslow Historians* is available for reading, and individual copies can be purchased. The first edition was published in the early 1970s. They continue to be the main source of reference for both serious research historians or for casual reading. Content can be traced through the index and further enquiries to OHS can often lead to finding material in our archives – just ask, leave a note at KATE or email us.

### Two recent books donated to our library



**Charles Pratt of Belmont Common – A life in the Air. Geelong's Pioneer Aviator, Aerial Photographer and Flying Instructor.** Author and publisher: Kevin O'Reilly, 2016. Donated by the author.

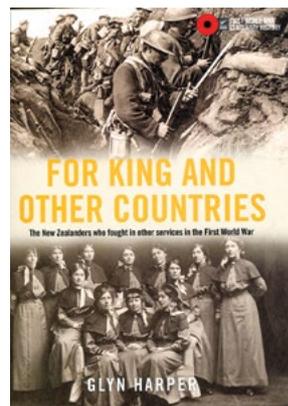
This is a biography of Charles Pratt a New Zealander who moved to Australia and established a commercial life in Geelong, Victoria, in the era between the two great wars. Charles was a photographer and this illustrated volume contains many of his unique images. The originals are housed in the State Library of Victoria.

OHS has had this photograph of Charles Pratt in its collection for a



long time. Here he is sitting in the trap outside Ngaio's first grocery shop on the corner of Kenya Street and Crofton Road, dated

1906 when the shop first opened. There is an account of the Pratt family early life in Wellington, including the years at Ngaio, in Kevin's book. By 1920 Charles had moved into aircraft and the two photographs depict his piloting at Belmont Common.



**For King and Other Countries. The New Zealanders who fought in the First World War,** by Glyn Harper, Massey University Press, Auckland, 2019. Donated by the publisher.

This collection of stories includes accounts of those not mentioned in detail in other published works of WW1. NZ's contribution of around 100,000 servicemen

and women was a massive effort for a small country. Included is Pixie Bell, the ambulance driver who returned to NZ. She married Captain Norman Bell who she met during her war service, and they became Ngaio residents. The couple established Wellington's Bell Bus Company in the 1920s. OHS was able to supply information and a photograph of Pixie to the publishers.